STILETTO HEELS TEAM

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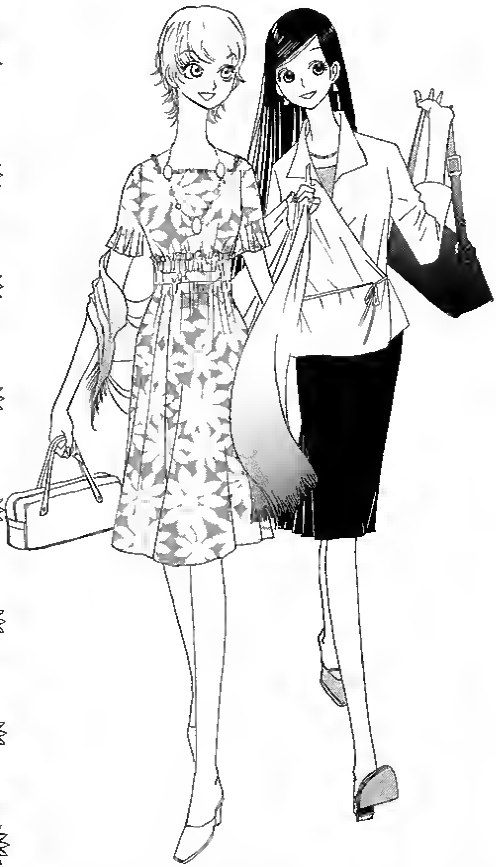
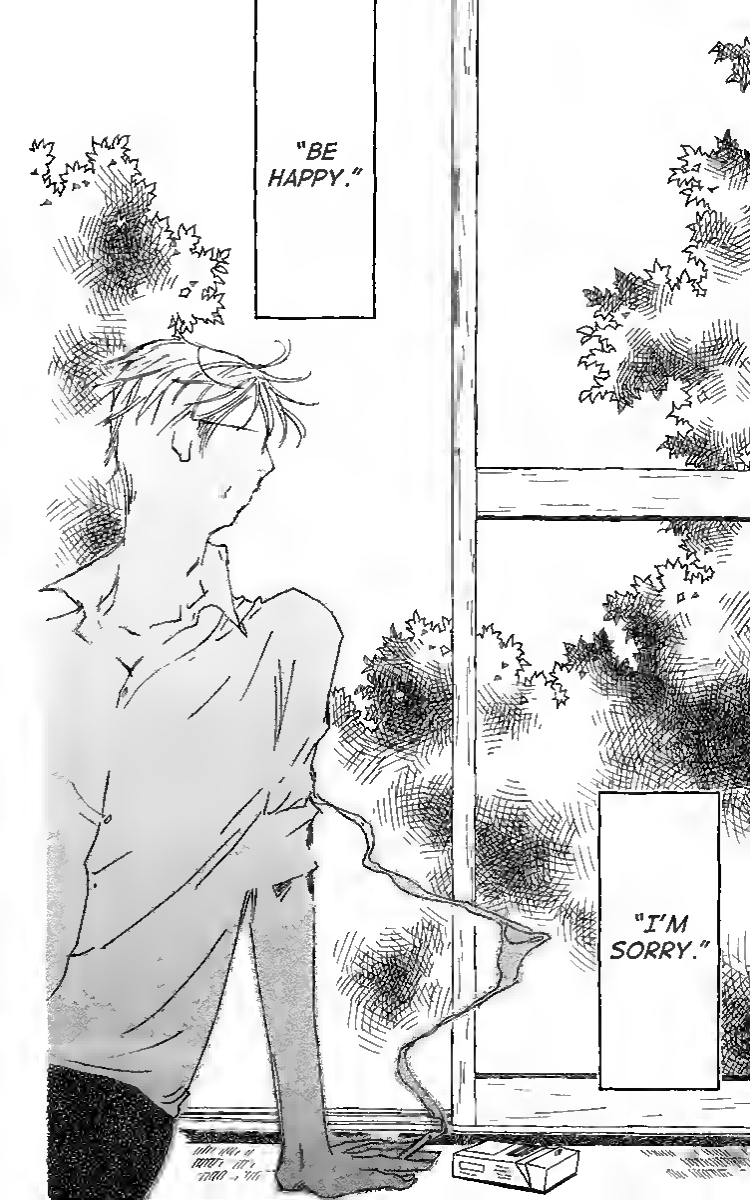
Volume 1, Ch.3

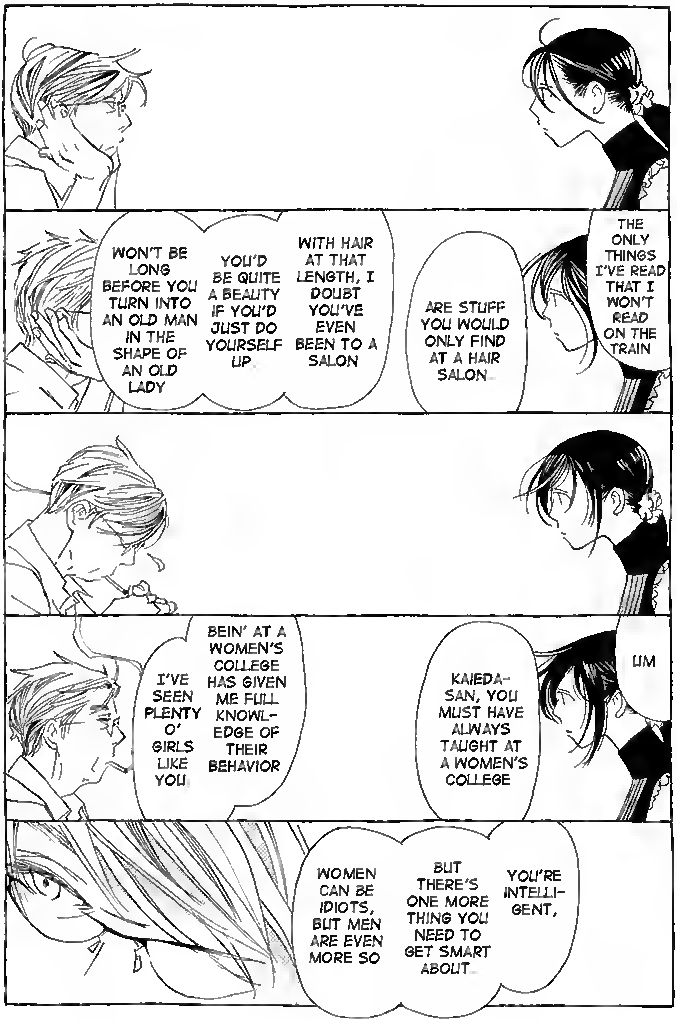



"BE HAPPY."
"I'M SORRY."

JEEZ
MORNIN'.
COOK UP SOME BREAKFAST, WILL YA?
WHAT... TIME IS IT?
7 O' CLOCK.
TCH! ONLY 7!
HA!
YOUR BOOBS MIGHTA POPPED OUT AGAIN, SO I COVERED YA WITH THE BLANKET.
Phew
Ah!
Eh?
FOOD, I NEED FOOD
JOKING

ANY EGGS?
I FORGOT TO GO TO MY GREAT-AUNT'S YESTERDAY
WHAT? BUT IT'S ONE OF MY FAVORITES
MAYBE I SHOULD BUY PJS
From Akimoto Misaki
Subject Right now...
I'm headed to Hakata
- END -
IT'S JUST FOR A DAY
I WON'T SPOIL YOU
I WAS SPOILED GROWIN' UP
To Akimoto Misaki
Subject Right Now...
Be careful, okay?
- END -
ARE YOU ALREADY TRYING TO GET ON MY NERVES?
THAT'S WHY YOU'RE UNPOPULAR
THEY SMOKE THE SAME BRAND

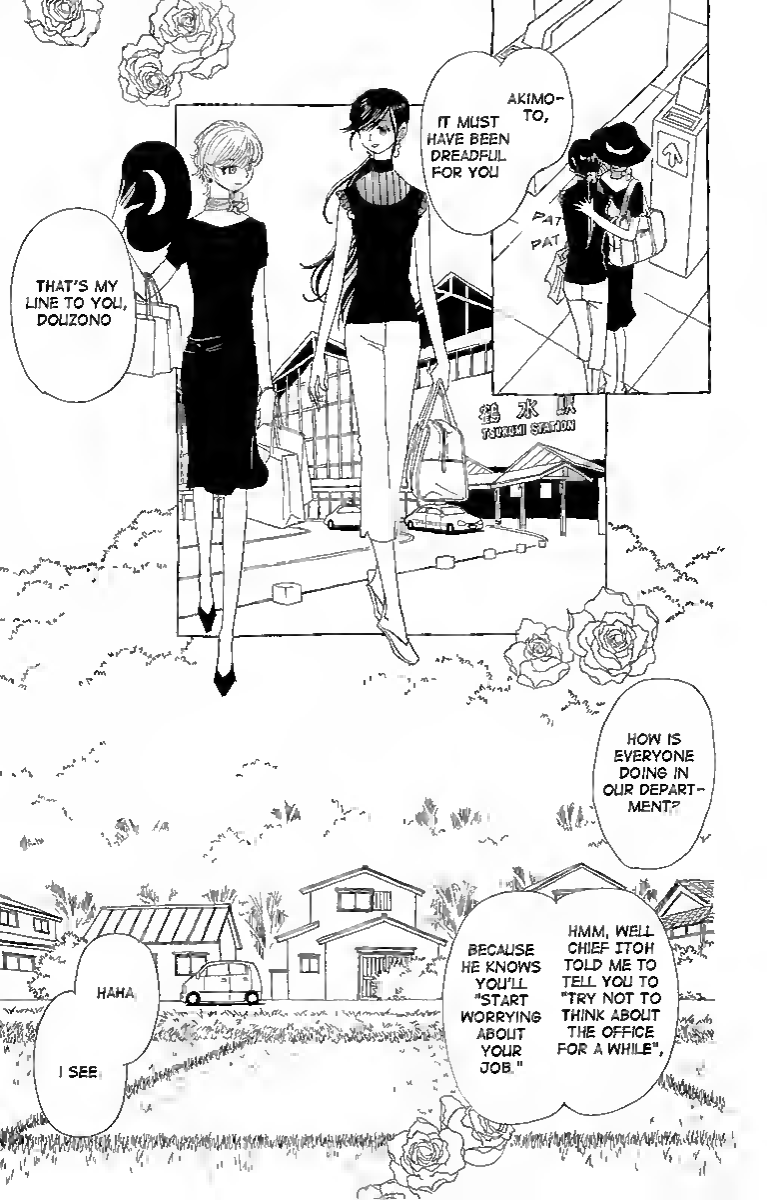
RUSTLE...
RESPONDIN' BETTER'N YESTERDAY AT LEAST.
YOU'RE HEAPS BETTER
MY GRAND-MOTHER PASSED AWAY,
AND NOW A GENTLEMAN CONNECTED TO HER,
A MAN (A COLLEGE PROFESSOR) HOLDING THE KEY TO HER "ANNEX",
HAS SHOWN UP IT'S BEEN THREE DAYS...
YES.
TYPHOON NO.7 OFF THE PHILIPPINE COAST
CENTRIFUGAL ATMOSPHERIC PRESSURE AT 940 HPA AND
SONY
YOU READ "THE WEEKLY SHUNJU"?
THEY'RE ALL MAGAZINES YOU'D FIND HANGING AS ADVERTISE-MENTS ON THE TRAIN
YOU'RE LIKE AN OLD MAN.
DON'T YOU READ WOMEN'S MAGA-ZINES?


THE ONLY THINGS I'VE READ THAT I WON'T READ ON THE TRAIN
ARE STUFF YOU WOULD ONLY FIND AT A HAIR SALON
WITH HAIR AT THAT LENGTH, I DOUBT YOU'VE EVEN BEEN TO A SALON
YOU'D BE QUITE A BEAUTY IF YOU'D JUST DO YOURSELF UP
WON'T BE LONG BEFORE YOU TURN INTO AN OLD MAN IN THE SHAPE OF AN OLD LADY
UM
KAIEDA-SAN, YOU MUST HAVE ALWAYS TAUGHT AT A WOMEN'S COLLEGE
BEIN' AT A WOMEN'S COLLEGE HAS GIVEN ME FULL KNOWL-EDGE OF THEIR BEHAVIOR
I'VE SEEN PLENTY O' GIRLS LIKE YOU
YOU'RE INTELLI-GENT,
BUT THERE'S ONE MORE THING YOU NEED TO GET SMART ABOUT
WOMEN CAN BE IDIOTS, BUT MEN ARE EVEN MORE SO

THINK OF IT AS PRACTICE AND TRY BEING IN LOVE WITH ME.
I TOLD YOU I CAN'T.
I'M GOING TO MY GREAT-AUNT'S TO BORROW HER CAR, AND THEN I'LL BE OUT AND ABOUT WITH A FRIEND.
Of all the things to say! You must have hit your head, grrrr!
NOW CHOP UP THAT FIREWOOD.
THAT'S COM-PLETELY BEYOND MY POWERS
WAS THAT
YOUR "GUIDANCE" AS A TEACHER?

BEAT'S ME

11→


AKIMOTO,
IT MUST HAVE BEEN DREADFUL FOR YOU
PAT PAT
THAT'S MY LINE TO YOU, DOUZONO
TSUKUI STATION
HOW IS EVERYONE DOING IN OUR DEPARTMENT?
HMM, WELL CHIEF ITOH TOLD ME TO TELL YOU TO "TRY NOT TO THINK ABOUT THE OFFICE FOR A WHILE",
BECAUSE HE KNOWS YOU'LL "START WORRYING ABOUT YOUR JOB."
HAHA
I SEE

HERE
IT'S FROM KOMINE.
Before the spirit of the deceased
Komine Soichi
HE'S REALLY WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
HE'S THE ONE WHO TOLD ME TO STAY A FEW EXTRA DAYS IF I COULD.
I SEE...
KOMINE SOICHI (CO-WORKER)
HOBBIES: FISHING
TEAMS
HUH? FROM NERIMA? IS HE DIETING?
HOW IS HE DOING?
YOU AREN'T MAKING BENTOS FOR HIM?
HE'S ALWAYS GOING TO THE KOMBINI* AT NIGHT, SO HE PUT ON A FEW POUNDS.
LOOKS LIKE IT
FINE, FINE. HE'S GOING TO COMMUTE BY BIKE TO WORK STARTING NEXT WEEK.
UM...
*Convenient Store

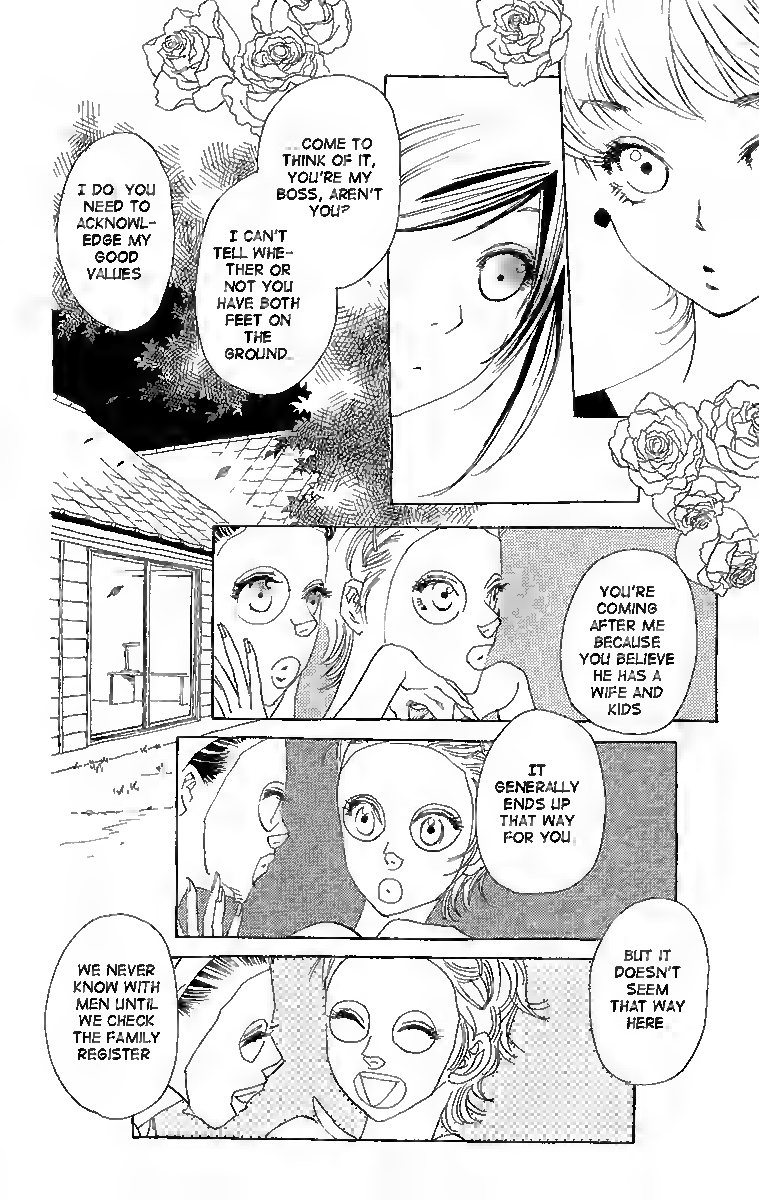
HEY, MIND IF I OPEN THE PRESENT?
GO AHEAD!
YEAH...
HA HA HA
I BET HE JUST GRABBED WHATEVER HE WANTED TO EAT HIMSELF
SHIGURE-STYLE OMI BEEF IN GERMAN BREAD WITH SALTED CARAMEL!
TAKE-YOKAN* AND SWEET-FISH COOKED IN NECTAR... WHERE'S HIS SENSE OF UNITY?
*Sweet bean jelly in bamboo husk
WHERE'S YOUR CLOSET?
Cheese and crackers... she must have been craving a drink.
TO REJUVE-NATE OUR TIRED SUMMER SKIN
LET'S DO IT AT NIGHT IT FEELS GOOD ONCE IT COOLS DOWN
WHOA!
Dior
PARIS
HEY, FACIAL MASKS?!
7 SHEETS

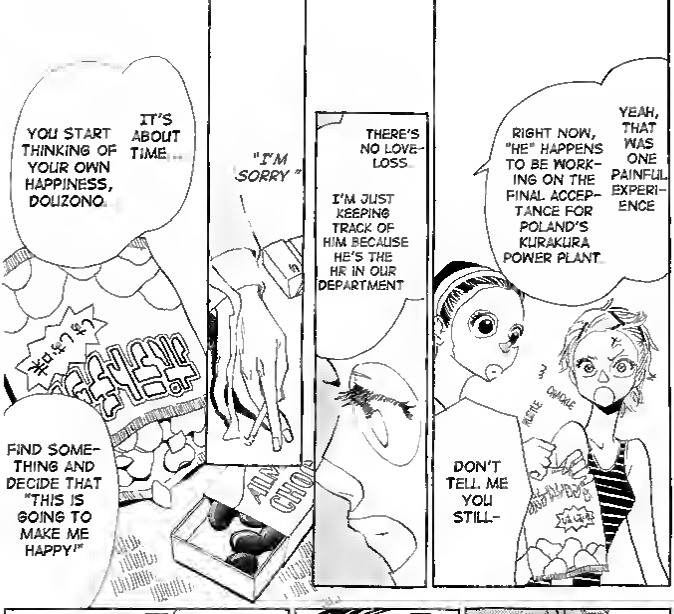
So he's here.
THUD
HUH?
HELLO
TOTSUKA ELECTRONICS STOCK COMPANY
Atomic Energy Division
PROJECT MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
CHIEF CLERK MISAKI AKIMOTO
HUH? BUT YOU HAVE ONE HERE IN YOUR HOUSE
AKI-MOTO, WANT TO GO TO THE BATHS?
TSUGUMI-SAN AND I ARE CO-WORKERS AND HAVE ALWAYS DEPENDED ON EACH OTHER
BUT, WELL, SHE'S EXTRA-ORDINARILY SUPERIOR AND HAS PROBABLY REACHED THE STARS BY NOW
IS THAT SO? THANKS FOR TAKING CARE OF HER
OH MY
HM?
WE DON'T USE GAS HERE, SO WHO KNOWS WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN?
THERE'S A HOT SPRING NEARBY
WHA-?
HUH?

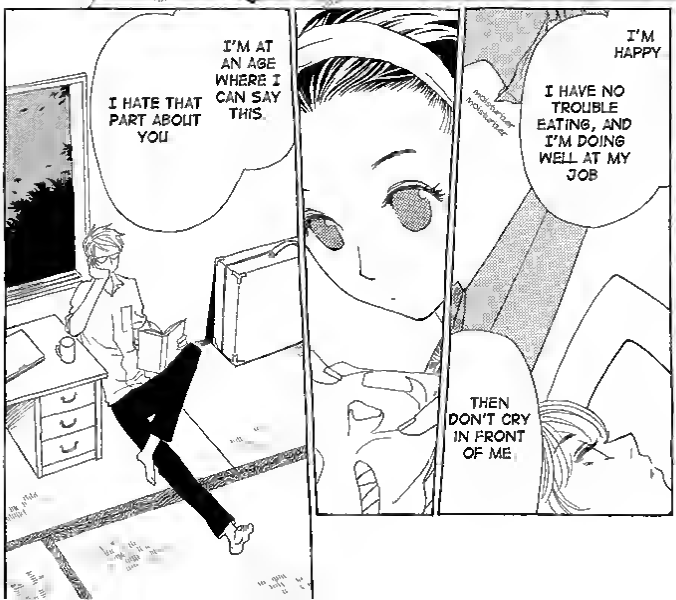
WOW,
IT LOOKS NEW DID IT APPEAR JUST RECENTLY?
YEP. THE VOLCANIC BELT IS UNDERNEATH, SO THEY APPEAR RATHER SUDDENLY
AHA!
CITIZENS PAY 200 YEN, WHILE EVERYONE ELSE PAYS 400. YOU LIVE HERE, SO YOU ONLY PAY 200 RIGHT?
I DON'T HAVE A CERTIFICATE OF RESIDENCE
200円
400円
SAY,
SHE'S LIVED HERE FOR A WHILE, SO CAN WE PAY THE CITIZEN'S FEE?
Huh?
FRONT
SHE'S THE GRANDCHILD OF PEOPLE WHO LIVED HERE GENERATION AFTER GENERATION, AND SHE'S BOUGHT LOTS OF THINGS LOCALLY
Stop it
You're just making it harder for me the next time around.
GET
See? You just have to speak up.

YOU MET HIM FOR THE FIRST TIME THREE DAYS AGO?
YEP
YOU GUYS ARE... COMPLETE STRANGERS?
YEP
SPL ASH
YOU'RE JUST GOING TO GET YOURSELF TRAPPED IN THE SAME PATTERN BY LETTING HIM LIVE THERE
I HAVEN'T EX-- PLAINED ANYTHING YET
I GET THE PICTURE

THUD
What are you doing?
Hanging out with Koyoza
IS HE MARRIED?
BEATS ME.
CHUBU BANK
LOOK, YOU'RE NOT SHACKING UP WITH A SECOND-GRADER, OK?
HE HAS THE KEYS
IT MAY BE A STRETCH, BUT DON'T YOU THINK THERE'S A POSSIBILITY THAT YOUR GRANDMOTHER MAY HAVE PROMISED HIM SOMETHING AS AN INHERITANCE?
AND HIS PRIVATE LIFE? YOU DON'T KNOW HIM AT ALL, DO YOU? YOU'RE WAAAY TOO NAIVE!
Too close.
WELL, I DID THINK IT WAS A POSSIBILITY,
SO I CHECKED WITH HER CLIENTS' FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS (BANKS, AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES, CREDIT UNIONS), AND CALLED UP EVERY INTERESTED PARTY FROM HER COLLEGE IN THE VICINITY,
AND THEY'VE ALL CONFIRMED THAT THIS IS NOT THE CASE.
AND I DID HIM A GREAT DISFAVOR WHEN I RIFLED THROUGH HIS BELONGINGS, BUT NOTHING SUSPICIOUS TURNED UP
Phew! He-loved now?
WHY ARE YOU TALKING IN YOUR BUSINESS-MAN TONE?
Sparkle
Sparkle
Please direct inquiries to Yotsuiro Electronics.
WHAT IS APPEALING IS THE SUFFICIENT ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH USED TO CONSTRUCT THE POWER PLANT WE ARE JUST SCRATCHING THE SURFACE.
IF YOU HAVE ANY OTHER QUESTIONS, FEEL FREE TO ASK, EVEN IF WE ARE GOING INTO OVERTIME


I DO. YOU NEED TO ACKNOWLEDGE MY GOOD VALUES
I CAN'T TELL WHETHER OR NOT YOU HAVE BOTH FEET ON THE GROUND.
...COME TO THINK OF IT, YOU'RE MY BOSS, AREN'T YOU?
YOU'RE COMING AFTER ME BECAUSE YOU BELIEVE HE HAS A WIFE AND KIDS
IT GENERALLY ENDS UP THAT WAY FOR YOU.
BUT IT DOESN'T SEEM THAT WAY HERE
WE NEVER KNOW WITH MEN UNTIL WE CHECK THE FAMILY REGISTER


IT'S ABOUT TIME...
YOU START THINKING OF YOUR OWN HAPPINESS, DOUZONO.
FIND SOMETHING AND DECIDE THAT "THIS IS GOING TO MAKE ME HAPPY!"
"I'M SORRY"
THERE'S NO LOVE-LOSS.
I'M JUST KEEPING TRACK OF HIM BECAUSE HE'S THE HR IN OUR DEPARTMENT
YEAH, THAT WAS ONE PAINFUL EXPERIENCE
RIGHT NOW, "HE" HAPPENS TO BE WORKING ON THE FINAL ACCEPTANCE FOR POLAND'S KURAKURA POWER PLANT.
DON'T TELL ME YOU STILL-


I HATE THAT PART ABOUT YOU
I'M AT AN AGE WHERE I CAN SAY THIS.
I'M HAPPY
I HAVE NO TROUBLE EATING, AND I'M DOING WELL AT MY JOB
THEN DON'T CRY IN FRONT OF ME.

IT'S ONE BIG JOKE
YOU WALKED INTO OUR BIG CORPORATION FRESH OUT OF SOME BACKWATERS COLLEGE,
DOING WORK THAT NOBODY ELSE COULD DO, AND HAD EVERYONE SAYING, "THAT'S BECAUSE SHE'S SUPERIOR."
BUT I KNOW HOW MUCH EFFORT YOU PUT INTO IT.
"BE HAPPY."
YOU COULD HAVE JUST LOOKED DOWN ON SOMEONE LIKE ME, WHO COULDN'T EVEN LEAVE A MARK NO MATTER HOW HARD SHE TRIED,
BUT YOU DIDN'T. THAT'S COM-MENDABLE.
"I CAN'T-"
BUT I GUESS YOUR BAD LUCK WITH MEN BALANCES THINGS OUT.

IF YOU...
"MAKE YOU HAPPY."
Japan's Atomic Power Collaborator
AM I WRONG?
IF YOU UNDERSTOOD THAT,
THEN LEAVE ME ALONE.
.....
BITCH.

RUSTLE...
RUSTLE...
RUSTLE...
.....
SAY,
AKIMOTO?

YOU KNOW,
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT IT FOR A LONG TIME.
BUT I GUESS I DON'T KNOW WHAT CONSTITUTES HAPPINESS.
STILL,
I'VE COME THIS FAR,
AND I KNOW THERE ARE PARTS OF ME THAT ARE UNPLEASANT OR WORTHLESS
I'M STARTING TO GET TIRED OF DENYING THEM.
EVEN SO...

ARE YOU STILL WILLING
TO BE FRIENDS WITH SOME ONE LIKE ME?

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

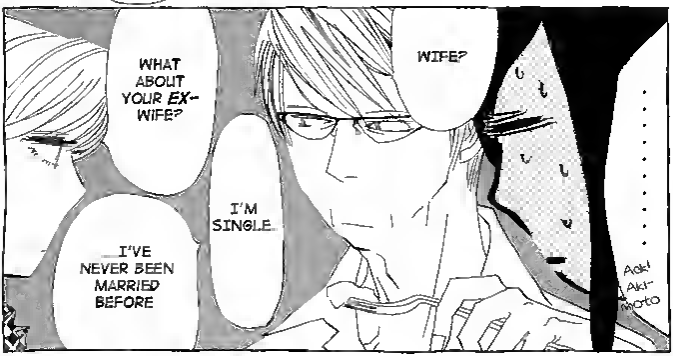
CLINK

As of yet, Typhoon No.7 has not gone past

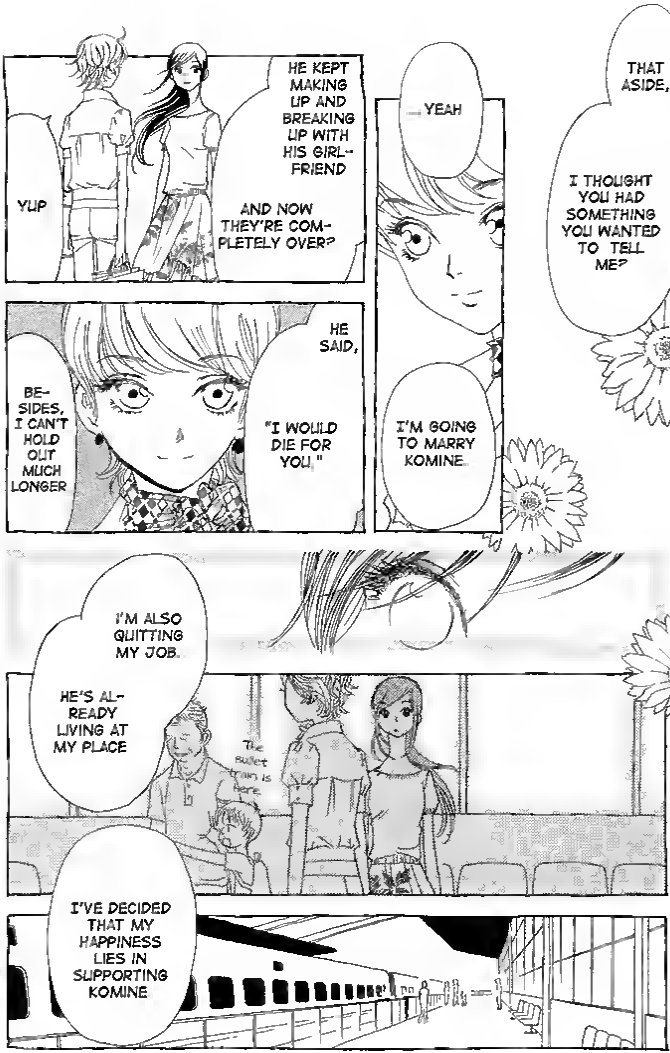
Central atmospheric pressure is at 950 hPa and Waves are unusual

Please be careful, Typhoon now

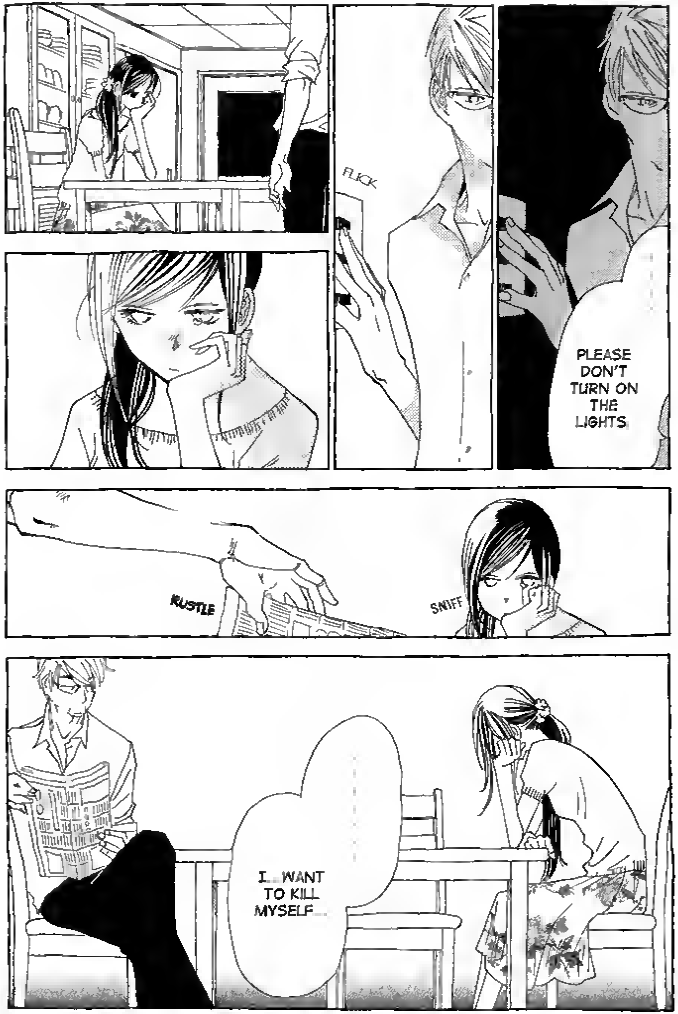
CLACK
CLACK
CLACK
It's delicious!
CLACK
CLACK
DOES YOUR WIFE KNOW YOU'RE HERE?


WIFE?
.....
WHAT ABOUT YOUR EX-WIFE?
I'M SINGLE.
...I'VE NEVER BEEN MARRIED BEFORE
Aoki Akimoto

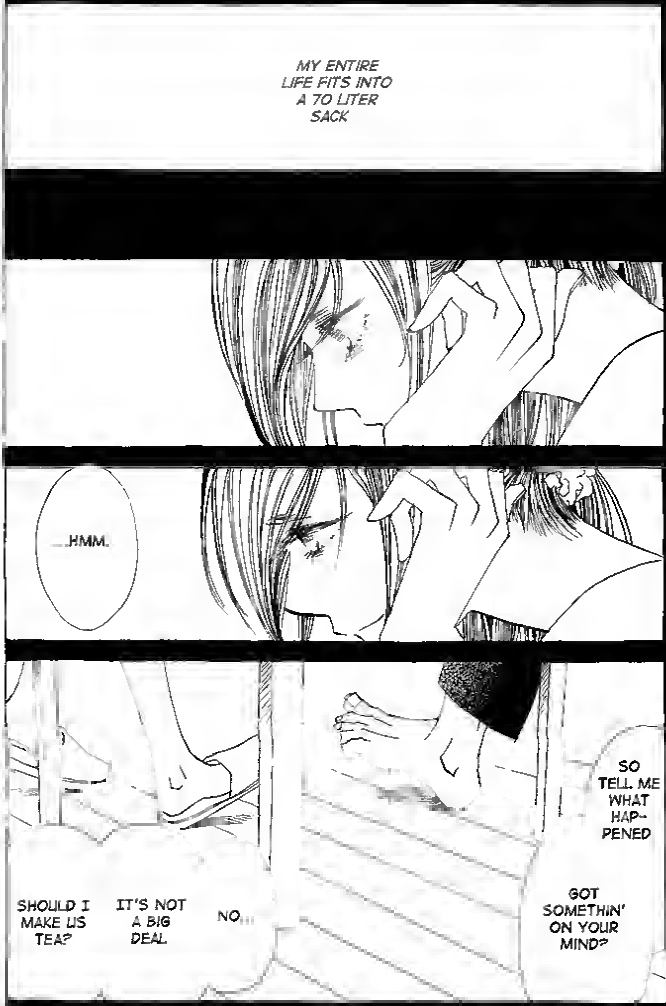
...I'M NOT SURE WHY YOU HAVE TA ASK THAT FIRST THING IN THE MORNIN',
BUT I CAN SEND YOU A COPY OF MY FAMILY REGISTER
SMI RK
NO, THAT WON'T BE NECES-SARY. I APOLO-GIZE
UH, UHH...
WHAT'S GOIN ON?
HE'S A NICE GUY
THAT'S COM-PLETELY DIFFERENT FROM WHAT YOU SAID AT FIRST...
MAYBE YOU GUYS HAVE SOME SORT OF CONNEC-TION?
I'LL PASS ON THAT... FOR NOW...
OK, and take these.
UP TO YOU
.....


HE KEPT MAKING UP AND BREAKING UP WITH HIS GIRL-FRIEND
AND NOW THEY'RE COMPLETELY OVER?
YUP
...YEAH
I'M GOING TO MARRY KOMINE.
HE SAID,
"I WOULD DIE FOR YOU."
BESIDES, I CAN'T HOLD OUT MUCH LONGER
THAT ASIDE,
I THOUGHT YOU HAD SOMETHING YOU WANTED TO TELL ME?
I'M ALSO QUITTING MY JOB.
HE'S ALREADY LIVING AT MY PLACE
The bullet train is here.
I'VE DECIDED THAT MY HAPPINESS LIES IN SUPPORTING KOMINE.

I DON'T HAVE ANY DOUBTS


FLICK
PLEASE DON'T TURN ON THE LIGHTS.
RUSTLE
SNIFF
I... WANT TO KILL MYSELF...

I COULD JUMP OFF OF THE TREE IN THE BACKYARD
WHATEVER WORKS...
HOW'RE YOU GONNA GO ABOUT IT?
RUSTLE
IF YOU'RE GONNA JUMP, DO IT IN THIS.
YOU'LL BE ABLE TO FIT IN AT YOUR SIZE.
CLEANING WOULD BE A PAIN OTHER-WISE


MY ENTIRE LIFE FIT'S INTO A 70 LITER SACK
...HMM.
SO TELL ME WHAT HAP-PENED
GOT SOMETHIN' ON YOUR MIND?
NO...
IT'S NOT A BIG DEAL
SHOULD I MAKE US TEA?